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## **UCare announces UCare Fund grants for 2010**

***Funds support organizations and innovative programs working to reduce obesity and promote healthy lifestyles in Minnesota***

MINNEAPOLIS, Sept. 3, 2010 – [UCare](#) announced today that its [UCare Fund](#) has distributed 27 grants totaling \$829,000 to Minnesota organizations working to reduce obesity and promote healthy lifestyles among people of all ages, cultures, and abilities.

The UCare Fund is a community-directed initiative of UCare, the fourth-largest health plan in Minnesota. Established in 1998, the Fund provides grants and staff support to projects that advance [UCare's mission](#) to improve the health of UCare members through innovative services and partnerships across communities, and reduce health disparities for disadvantaged populations in the Twin Cities and throughout Greater Minnesota.

“We know there is greater need in the community this year for health care services funding, and the response to our grant solicitation reflected that,” said Ghita Worcester, Senior Vice President of Public Affairs and Marketing, UCare. “We’re pleased to be able to distribute grants this year to programs that help underserved Minnesotans live healthier lives.”

Following is a list of the 27 UCare Fund grants:

- [AccessAbility, Inc.](#) – The \$20,000 grant will fund activities for Project Connect, which helps Minnesotans who face employment barriers, such as low literacy competency, chemical dependency, and health issues, find jobs that provides them with a living wage.
- [YWCA of Minneapolis](#) – The \$15,000 grant will fund the Strong Fast Fit Youth program, which provides culturally specific fitness and health education programming that focuses on obesity reduction and diabetes management for 120 Native American and Latino youth and their families.
- [Minnesota Academy of Family Physicians](#) – The \$5,000 grant will fund a hands-on research program that aims to advance patient care by prompting medical students and family medicine residents to explore the important role that family medicine research plays in the clinical care of patients.

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- [Willmar Women and Family Center](#) – The \$42,000 grant will help increase the capacity of the African Family Health Lifestyle Program to reach more Willmar-area Somali refugee and immigrant women and families with assistance in providing more culturally competent health care.
- [YWCA of St. Paul](#) – The \$20,000 grant will fund the Youth in Motion program for low-income youth of color that addresses childhood obesity and promotes skills, tools, and attitudes to build and maintain healthy lifestyles.
- [Parenting Resource Center, Inc.](#) – The \$45,000 grant will support the Safe Kids/Healthy Kids project directed at culturally diverse children in Austin who are disadvantaged by serious parental conflicts. Program components will promote exercise, nutritious eating, and emotional well-being.
- [The City, Inc.](#) – The \$28,120 grant will fund the Health City Kids Project, which aims to promote healthy lifestyles, improve nutrition, and reduce obesity among predominantly low-income African American students ages 5-14 and their parents in the metro area.
- [Otter Tail County Public Health](#) – The \$50,000 grant will fund a public awareness campaign developed by the Otter Tail Family Services Collaborative’s Chemical Health Work Group to address substance abuse by area youth.
- Native American Community Clinic – The \$50,000 grant will fund the [Running Wolf Fitness Center](#) program, a free fitness center serving an underserved population in Minneapolis’ Native American community.
- [North Metro Pediatrics](#) – The \$10,000 grant will fund the Healthy Beginnings Program, which provides affordable and accessible pediatric care for children in the north metro area.
- [Neighborhood HealthSource](#) (formerly Fremont Community Clinics) – The \$50,000 grant will fund the Healthy Lifestyle Project, which targets low-income, metro-area racial/ethnic minorities at risk for, or who already have, chronic disease or mental health issues.
- [University of Minnesota College in the Schools](#) – The \$31,500 grant will fund the Smart and Healthy Students, Smart and Healthy Families program within Twin Cities-area high schools that offer human anatomy and physiology courses through the University of Minnesota’s College in the Schools program.
- [Isanti County Public Health](#) – The \$30,000 grant will support the Cambridge-based Teen-Age Parent Program at the Area Learning Center, which provides prenatal education, well-child care, nutrition services, and parenting skills education to pregnant and parenting teens.

- **STIM Learning Center** – The \$23,140 grant will fund the Childcare for Healthcare program, which will provide childcare services for parents of young children who have trouble scheduling or maintaining clinic appointments due to lack of childcare resources. The program is a collaboration of the Broadway Family Medicine Clinic, the STIM Learning Center, and UCare.
- **[Resource for Child Caring](#)** – The \$15,000 grant funds the Healthy Learners: Obesity Reduction and Healthy Lifestyles in Early Childhood program in Minneapolis and St. Paul.
- **[Minneapolis Department of Health and Family Support](#)** – The \$75,000 grant will help fund operations of the Skyway Senior Center, which offers daily physical fitness sessions, health and wellness programs, lifelong learning opportunities, socialization events, volunteer opportunities, and other enrichment activities for adults age 50 and over.
- **[Sabathani Community Center](#)** – The \$22,200 grant will support health services such as clinics and senior-oriented health/fitness education for African American elders in South Central Minneapolis.
- **[Minnesota Medical Foundation of the University of Minnesota](#)** – The \$50,000 grant will help initiate a first-of-its-kind examination of brain function, structure, genetics, and cognitive/language status in older women.
- **[LifeCare Medical Center](#)** – The \$9,400 grant will fund activities in the Roseau County School Nutrition program, including having a dietician consult with the local school food service staff on menu planning and food preparation to maximize healthy breakfast and lunch nutrition for students.
- **[Augustana Care](#)** – The \$35,000 grant will fund a project to help reduce isolation and loneliness among elders living at Augustana Apartments of Minneapolis, a senior living community. The program will feature 20 graduate students from the University of Minnesota’s Gerontology program working with Augustana staff and residents.
- **[Reach Out and Read Minnesota](#)** – The \$20,000 grant will enable this program to provide culturally and age-appropriate children’s books to family medicine and pediatrics primary care clinics throughout the Twin Cities.
- **[New Americans Community Services](#)** – The \$50,000 grant will help fund the Older New American Project, which educates Somali elders in the metro area about the appropriate use of services that enable seniors to remain in their homes and communities.
- **[Portico Healthnet](#)** – The \$50,000 grant will aid efforts to help uninsured Twin Cities Latinos obtain health care coverage through culturally and linguistically appropriate outreach services.

- [Volunteers of America of Minnesota](#) – The \$12,925 grant will help support the Senior Partners Care program, which connects 1,850 low-to-moderate income seniors to health care providers who accept Medicare payment as payment-in-full, waiving all Medicare co-pays and deductibles.
- [Vietnamese Social Services of Minnesota](#) – The \$16,625 grant will support the Health is Gold project, which increases awareness and promotes healthy nutrition and smoking cessation in the Vietnamese and Karen communities of Minneapolis and St. Paul.
- [Bloomington Public Health](#) – The \$39,126 grant will fund development of a public health culturally and linguistically appropriate services (CLAS) assessment tool. The goal of this tool's development is to increase culturally competent care provided by public health agencies.
- [Inter-County Nursing Service](#) – The \$15,000 grant will fund development and maintenance of a web-based, comprehensive community resource referral list for health care agencies in northwestern Minnesota.

UCare Fund grant applicants must be Minnesota-based organizations; private nonprofit or public tax-exempt 501(c) (3) organizations; city, county, and other governmental agencies eligible to receive funding; tribal governments and agencies; and research and faith-based organizations addressing the needs of underserved populations. Grants are determined by members of the UCare Fund Council, which includes representatives of the UCare's Board of Directors, and a Consumer Board Representative. The next funding cycle occurs Sept. 1, 2010 - Aug. 31, 2011.

### **About UCare**

UCare ([www.ucare.org](http://www.ucare.org)) is an independent, nonprofit health plan providing health care and administrative services to more than 200,000 members. UCare partners with health care providers, counties, and community organizations to create and deliver innovative health coverage products for:

- Individuals and families enrolled in income-based Minnesota Health Care Programs, such as MinnesotaCare and Prepaid Medical Assistance Program.
- Adults with disabilities and Medicare beneficiaries with chronic health conditions.
- Minnesotans dually eligible for Medical Assistance and Medicare.
- Medicare-eligible individuals throughout Minnesota and in western Wisconsin.

UCare addresses health care disparities and care access issues through its UCare Fund grants and a broad array of community initiatives. The health plan received a Top Workplaces 2010 honor from the *Star Tribune*.